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2. The process according to claim 1, in which said water-insoluble inorganic powder is at least one of ceramic raw materials.

3. The process according to claim 1, in which said water-insoluble inorganic powder is at least one of metal oxides other than alkali metal oxides.

4. The process according to claim 1, in which said water-insoluble inorganic powder is at least one of compound oxides of metals other than alkali metals.

5. The process according to claim 1, in which said water-insoluble inorganic powder has a particle size of 0.1 to 10 μ .

6. The process according to claim 1, in which said amount of the water-insoluble inorganic powder is in the

12

range of 0.2 to 10% by weight, based on the weight of SiO_2 in the sol.

7. The process according to claim 1, in which said firing temperature is in the range of 1100° to 1500°C.

8. The process according to claim 1, in which said dried silica gel is first pre-fired at 500° to 900°C and fired at 1000° to 1600°C.

9. The process according to claim 8, in which said pre-firing temperature is in the range of 550° to 750°C.

10. The process according to claim 8, in which said firing temperature is in the range of 1100° to 1500°C.

11. A lightweight, non-hygroscopic foamed product prepared by the process of claim 1.

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